

U. S. will make good on moldy proof sets

By Roger Boye

Uncle Sam will give free "credit certificates" to persons who return their government-packaged proof sets containing moldy coins.

The exchange offer follows reports that mold and corrosion have damaged a few 1984 and 1985 sets.

"We're committed to maintaining the integrity of our product," said Jon B. Rawlson, special assistant to the U. S. Mint director. He added that the certificates can be used to buy new (current year) sets.

Proof coins are sonically sealed in hard plastic to keep out dust and moisture, but recent government tests on some of the damaged proofs indicate that high levels of humidity over long periods can foster coin corrosion

despite the packaging.

Rawlson added that mint technicians are investigating whether there is a better way to seal the proof-set cases to protect coins from moisture. Also, mint officials might begin advising proof-set buyers in writing to store their sets in a dry, low humidity location.

Collectors with damaged sets can ask the U. S. Mint to provide a postage-paid label to use in returning the sets by writing to the Customer Service Center, United States Mint, 10001 Aerospace Drive, Lanham, Md. 20706, or calling 1-301-436-7400. The credit certificates are good for current-year sets because the government normally does not keep sets from previous years.

As of March 29, mint officials had received 21 sets with moldy or corroded coins. Since 1982,

the government has charged \$11 for a five-coin proof set; during most of the 1980s, sales exceeded three million sets a year.



Legislation in Congress requiring new designs on the "tails sides" of circulating coins—which some hobbyists once thought was on the fast track to becoming law—has again stalled in the House Subcommittee on Consumer Affairs and Coinage.

Some subcommittee members believe that just one coin—rather than all five—should be redesigned, and the lawmakers have yet to resolve their disagreement. Under normal procedure, the subcommittee must approve the legislation before it can advance in the House.

The Senate passed a redesign bill last June, and about 270 of